

Town of Wellesley, Massachusetts

Design Review Board



Design Guidelines Handbook

Adopted: November 9, 1989

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PART I - INTRODUCTION

THE DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

In 1976 Wellesley adopted a design review section in the Zoning Bylaw and established a Design Review Board to review special permit applications for signs. The design review process was expanded in 1983 to require review of all signs and major and minor construction projects. The process represents a community effort to improve the visual appearance of the Town, particularly commercial areas, in a way that respects the existing townscape and stresses the quality and character of design detail. It is a conscious effort to reduce existing clutter and to prevent uncoordinated changes to buildings and signs. Consideration for the overall surrounding area, not just one structure, is the major concern.

Design and sign review provides a method by which merchants, property owners and citizens can work with Town agencies to respond to the desire to produce and maintain an attractive environment.

RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER TOWN BOARDS

The Design Review Board's members are appointed by the Planning Board and they periodically meet jointly to discuss issues of mutual concern. The Design Review Board's relationship with the Zoning Board of Appeals (Special Permit Granting Authority) is based on the required review of all signs requiring special permits and major construction projects, which require approval from Zoning Board of Appeals. The Design Review Board's preliminary and final recommendations on these proposals are taken into consideration by the Board of Appeals during the approval process. The Design Review Board reviews projects proposed for Town property by the Natural Resources Commission, Department of Public Works or other Town agencies. The Board interacts with other Town departments as the need arises. In essence, the Design Review Board is advisory to the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, the Inspector of Buildings and the Town as a whole in matters of design.

DESIGN REVIEW BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The Design Review Board derives its authority from Article 46 of the Town Bylaw and Section XXII of the Zoning Bylaw, which states that "the Design Review Board shall review requests for sign permits

submitted under the provisions of Section XXIIA (Signs and Advertising Devices), requests for site plan approval submitted in accordance with Section XVIA. Site Plan Approval and other projects as specified in this Zoning Bylaw. It shall evaluate such requests based on Part C., Design Criteria of this Section. Its findings, along with any restrictions and conditions, shall be incorporated in the recommendations of the Planning Board to the Special Permit Granting Authority."

The Town Bylaw states that the Board must review the design, placement, and artistic appropriateness of any structure or portion thereof, work of art, ornament, or decoration to be placed on any public way or Town land other than cemeteries, or on or in Town buildings. The construction, installation, alteration, removal, or payment of funds for any of the above may not occur until after Board review.

As specified in the Zoning Bylaw, membership consists of the Chairman of the Planning Board or designee, a person qualified by training and experience in the fine arts or landscape design, a retailer doing business in the Town, and two members qualified by training or experience in the art or design professions.

All facade renovations, new construction and new signs require Design Review Board review and a building or sign permit from the Building Department. Single and two family homes are exempt from the design review process.

This handbook is a description of what criteria are used by the Design Review Board in making its recommendations and an explanation of how the design review process works. It is also intended to help those interested in making improvements better understand and utilize the design review process to achieve positive results.

COMMUNITY CHARACTER

The Board's recommendations often refer to maintaining or enhancing the "character" of Wellesley. The following discussion is an attempt to generally define those elements and features that contribute to the "character" of the Town. Community character is formed in part by the community's cultural past. Wellesley's character and scale is residential, as over 80% of the land is used for residential purposes.

The majority of projects reviewed by the Design Review Board are located in or near the commercial areas and major educational institutions. These are the areas described below. The first four commercial areas discussed are the oldest in the Town, with their character and style of building a direct result of early transportation corridors and centralized residential patterns. Because the Board also reviews projects at Babson College, Wellesley College, and Massachusetts Bay Community College, brief discussions of their architectural character is also included.

Wellesley Square

In Wellesley Square, display windows, signage and building scale are predominantly oriented to the pedestrian. Stores include pharmacies, clothing stores, gift stores, and small restaurants. A few buildings are devoted entirely to office uses, but most over two stories contain a mix of retail on the first floor and offices above. The Square is relatively compact, with businesses clustered on Central, Church and Washington Streets and most parking lots around the perimeter. A walk from one end to the other takes no longer than 20 minutes. Many buildings are brick, but there are quite a variety of facade treatments including concrete block, wood and synthetic stucco. Awnings on south facing facades are common in a variety of colors and styles. Most buildings were constructed before 1950. Open space is provided in five parks (including Town Hall) of various sizes with benches and landscaping. The park-like Wellesley College campus defines the southern and western limits of the commercial area. Homes surrounding this business area, both single and multi-family, include some located in the Historic District. Most were constructed before 1900 and generally have fine architectural details worth preserving.

Wellesley Hills

The Wellesley Hills commercial area runs along Washington Street for approximately one mile from Forest Street to Worcester Street, and few business establishments are located off the main street. Because of the volume of traffic and the location of the intersection of Routes 16 and 9 at Wellesley Hills, it has more of a vehicular orientation than Wellesley Square. Buildings are generally one to three stories high with brick facades. Most buildings are placed directly at the sidewalk. There are several buildings with historical or local cultural significance, some of which have been converted to other uses. Parking lots tend to be

located behind buildings in this district. Residential uses, both single and multi-family, surround the district. Elm Park provides the only town-owned green space in the business area.

Wellesley Lower Falls

Lower Falls developed as a mill and an industrial area over two hundred years ago, and some of this original character remains. Buildings are generally located at the street with parking in the rear. While office buildings here have as many as four stories, most retail establishments are housed in one-story buildings. There are few mixed-use retail and office buildings. The Charles River forms the boundary with Newton in Lower Falls, and the Charles River Reservation along its banks creates a pleasant open area. Most signage and display windows are oriented to pedestrians and slow moving traffic.

Wellesley Fells

A small compact commercial area, located on Weston Road and Worcester Street (Route 9), has a split character depending on street orientation. The neighborhood shopping area at Wellesley Fells on Weston Road is characterized by one and two story buildings located at the sidewalk for a pedestrian scale. Four businesses, located on Worcester Street, are oriented to high-speed traffic. The proximity to houses within walking distance makes it convenient for pedestrian business from the surrounding area. Building facades exhibit a variety of materials, but white painted facades are predominant. On Worcester Street, buildings exhibit a variety of styles and materials.

Linden Street

The character of the commercial area on Linden Street between Crest Road and Kingsbury Street is that of an automobile oriented plaza. An industrial area at the turn of the century, it has evolved into an automobile plaza with low buildings set back from the street and parking lots in front. Few of the original industrial buildings remain today. Linden trees lining the street help to soften the impact of the large expanses of asphalt. Two three story office buildings have been constructed in the commercial area. Most building facades are red brick. Signage here is generally understated and is oriented to slow moving vehicular traffic and pedestrians. This section of Linden Street has a number of townhouses and multi-family homes surrounding the business node.

Worcester Street at the Natick Town line

A small commercial area at the Natick town line on Route 9 is characterized by buildings and signage oriented to fast moving vehicular traffic. Buildings are set back from the street with parking lots located in front, to the side, and in the rear. Larger signage is allowed for businesses fronting Worcester Street because the Town recognizes that this area differs in orientation from the others discussed above. Facades exhibit a variety of materials and styles, with most buildings constructed during the 1950's and '60's.

There is little or no pedestrian traffic and the business establishments have provided little on-site landscaping. This business area merges with a larger one with a similar character in Natick, forming a long strip of business activity on Route 9.

Walnut Street

A commercial area characterized by a number of office buildings is located on Walnut Street with easy access to Route 128, and is bordered by the Charles River Reservation along the riverbanks. The buildings are generally three or four stories high with large parking lots in the rear. Most facades are brick, and a few of the old mill buildings have been converted to office uses. Few homes directly abut this area. The parks adjacent to the river provide pleasant open areas and scenic vistas for the enjoyment of workers and residents.

Worcester Street at Cedar Street

A mixed commercial center at the intersection of Worcester Street and Cedar Street contains a variety of uses including medical offices, automobile dealerships, and general office uses in a mix of building styles of various ages that appears to lack an overall definitive character. Most are oriented to Worcester Street traffic and although surrounded by residential uses, do not serve neighborhood shopping needs. The area is adjacent to the Rosemary Brook Town Forest.

Wellesley College

Wellesley College, located on Central Street near Wellesley Square, is mainly characterized by older stone and brick buildings in a mature landscape. Buildings are a mix of styles, predominantly Gothic. Most modern additions have not detracted from the architectural character of the campus because historical forms have been incorporated into design plans. The college is located on the

shores of Lake Waban, and the park-like setting is carefully maintained. Open spaces with wide vistas and wooded areas make up the campus landscape. Most college buildings are not visible from Wellesley streets.

Babson College

Located on Wellesley Avenue and Forest Street, the Babson campus is largely wooded around the perimeter with most buildings located in the interior. Most of the buildings visible from the street have red brick facades with elements characteristic of classical architecture. The campus is characterized by series of open spaces and interconnected lawns framed by woodland and natural areas.

Massachusetts Bay Community College

Located on Oakland Street near the intersection of Route 9, the campus encompasses about four acres of wooded land with a view of the Boston skyline. The main building, with a red brick and multi-color metal facade, is set on a hill. The campus landscape consists of interconnecting parking lots with lawns and open spaces framed by wooded areas.

SUMMARY

The Town's residential character is dominated by single-family uses with multi-family uses located near the commercial cores. The commercial areas and colleges are surrounded by residential neighborhoods; consequently, the environmental impact on residential areas of additional construction must be considered.

Wellesley's existing commercial urban design fabric is the result of years of evolution and development of the business areas along the major transportation corridors. The number of individual buildings of historical architectural importance is not great, but groups of such buildings are the backbone of the commercial fabric. The village scale of the older commercial areas is compatible with residential uses.

Floor area ratio requirements in commercial districts are intended to control the size of new commercial development, and parking requirements often shape the landscape plan. Because earlier commercial buildings that established Wellesley's commercial character were not subject to these new requirements, more care must be taken now to preserve and enhance the existing townscape with

projects that are compatible with existing conditions. The Board encourages the use of existing landforms and landscaping to enrich open spaces and to screen and enhance parking lots and buildings.

Where zoning requirements dictate building placement, layout and shape, designers must be creative in order to blend proposed buildings into the surroundings. Visual cues should be taken from the surrounding streetscape to avoid costly errors. In a town with a small, pedestrian suburban scale, design "mistakes" and "mishaps" are conspicuous.

Signage in districts with pedestrian scales should be so oriented. The sign bylaw requirements, as adopted by the Town, provide for adequate business identification. The Design Review Board role is to ensure that proposed signage conforms to the scale and character of the building and the Town.

The Design Review Board believes that the desirable elements which contribute to the Town's character should be preserved. It will become more challenging as the Town is more intensely developed. There is little available land for residential or commercial development left, and care must be taken that all new structures or alterations to existing structures should not detract from a scale and character that the Town is committed to preserving.

The intent of the Design Review Board is not to prescribe what styles of architecture or signage they would like to see in any area of Town. Applicants are expected to be creative with architectural styles and materials and it is expected that new construction will blend with existing scales and styles. At Design Review Board meetings, new ideas and concepts are often generated. The Board will work within an applicant's needs to achieve results beneficial to both the applicant and the Town.

PART II - DESIGN CRITERIA

The five design criteria set forth in Zoning Bylaw Section XXII. Design Review are listed below. For each criterion, the intent, policy and recommendations of the Design Review Board are discussed.

The intent and policy largely comes directly from the bylaw and includes other policies developed by the Board over time. Recommendations listed are derived from actual comments and recommendations of the Board on a variety of projects. The handbook is intended to be a guide and not as a prescriptive approach to what features of a project the Design Review Board will approve or disapprove.

1. PRESERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF LANDSCAPING

A. Intent:

The landscape should be preserved in its natural state insofar as practicable, by minimizing tree and soil removal, and any grade changes shall be in keeping with the general appearance of neighboring developed areas.

The preservation and enhancement of landscaping can often make the difference between a successful and an unsuccessful design approach. It is the Design Review Board's intent to enhance the town with landscaping and screening of paved areas, preserving existing landforms and vegetation wherever possible.

B. Policy:

Proposals for new construction in Wellesley should integrate existing vegetation and landforms into plans, keeping in mind the relationship of the natural environment to surrounding properties and the townscape. All proposed construction can and should be enhanced with the proper landscaping and skillful use of existing topography and landforms. Landscaping and screening of parking areas must be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Off Street Parking section of the Zoning Bylaw (XXI).

C. Recommendations:

- a. Landscaping in the interior of parking lots should be

provided, incorporating existing trees, berms and other landforms where possible;

- b. Plant materials should be chosen for longevity, low maintenance requirements, attractive appearance, ability to survive, and potential screening. Indicate on plans the sizes and types of plant materials proposed;
- c. Roadway, driveway and pedestrian walkway slopes should be kept to conservative grades: 5% or less;
- d. Evergreens are an effective year round buffer between business and residential areas;
- e. Existing landforms should be used to shelter, enhance, or berm buildings in appropriate cases;
- f. Planters should be used to visually break up paved areas and/or to enhance an ordinary facade;
- g. The planting of street trees in sidewalks should be considered for projects which impact the streetscape. Such improvements should be discussed with the Superintendent of the Park and Tree Division of the Department of Public Works. Wherever possible, street trees shall be retained.

2. RELATION OF BUILDINGS TO ENVIRONMENT

A. Intent:

Proposed development shall be related harmoniously to the terrain and to the use, scale, and architecture of existing buildings in the vicinity that have a functional or visual relationship to the proposed buildings.

Development in Wellesley has usually occurred in a way which has enhanced the visual quality of the town and the quality of life for its residents. This quality is the result of the harmonious relationship among the various elements of the built environment and with the natural environment. In order to preserve and enhance these qualities, it is the intent of this criterion to

identify the elements of design which affect the subjective relationship between the existing fabric of the Town and proposed new construction, and to provide guidelines for insuring that the new construction will add to the visual quality of the townscape. The Community Character section of this Handbook briefly describes the character of Wellesley's commercial nodes and major educational institutions.

The intent here is NOT to discourage new and innovative architectural forms, but instead to identify certain characteristics which contribute to the overall environmental harmony of the Town. It is the Board's firm belief that new styles and building technologies can be appropriate for the town as long as they are not harshly discordant with the existing forms.

When preparing plans for design review, applicants should be cognizant of the interrelationships among buildings in the area.

Each building is more than a separate structure - it is part of the environment. A design professional can often help to fit a building into the existing environment, especially major construction projects and facade renovations involving a substantial change.

B. Policy:

The design of proposed new construction in Wellesley should acknowledge and respect the surrounding existing patterns of development, and should be such that those desirable existing patterns are complimented and strengthened. Proposed buildings shall be visually related to their surroundings with respect to:

Height	Street facade
Materials, texture and color	Roof slopes
Rhythm of solids and voids	Scale
Spacing of buildings or signs	Fenestration
Open space and landscapes	

Handicapped pedestrian access should be provided to buildings in accordance with State regulations.

C. Recommendations:

- a. A sense of scale directly relating to the surrounding neighborhood should be provided;
- b. Architectural styles should be compatible with the character of the town and/or existing structures;
- c. Materials should be chosen carefully, and it is generally more desirable to use as few differing materials as possible;
- d. Coordinated signage should be planned when alterations to facades or new buildings are designed;
- e. Cluttering of roof lines as a result of too many different angles and roof pitches should be avoided;
- f. Mechanical equipment, including metal chimneys, at grade, attached to, or on the roof of a building, should be screened from view; or they should be integrated into the overall design of the building;
- g. Elevator penthouses, especially when added during building renovation, should be integrated into the design of the building by use of materials, placement, roof shape or form, or other means;
- h. Solar control devices such as awnings should be considered for south facing commercial facades;
- i. Landscaping should be used to enhance the design and to either strengthen or buffer the visual relationship with surrounding areas;
- j. A study model should be submitted when designing major construction projects to demonstrate the relationships and scale of the building to the environment;
- k. Exposed foundation walls should be minimized.

3. OPEN SPACE

A. Intent:

The intent of this criterion is to insure that the valuable open space in the Town is preserved and enhanced. Included are the visual advantages of open space as well as the physical use of open spaces. An open "feeling" is often effective in the built environment to convey the illusion of greater open space than exists.

It is the intent of the Design Review Board to maximize the quantity, quality and use of open space within the parameters of new construction and building alterations in the Town of Wellesley.

B. Policy:

All open space (landscaped and usable) should be designed to add to the visual amenities of the area by maximizing its visibility for persons passing the site or overlooking it from nearby properties. The site should be made more enjoyable for users and inhabitants.

Proposals should be consistent with town open space goals and plans. Any proposed development should not detract from existing open space areas nearby, and existing landscaping and landforms should be incorporated into plans and used to the advantage of the design.

Building scale, setbacks, height, texture and roof slopes shall contribute to the greater enhancement or illusion of open space.

C. Recommendations:

- a. To enhance buildings and the surrounding areas, trees should be planted along streets and sidewalks and ample parking lot landscaping and screening should be provided;
- b. Small parks with seating areas should be provided where possible;
- c. Ground coverage by paved areas should be minimized;
- d. A study model should be submitted when designing a major construction project to study the rhythm of

solids and voids and open space relationships.

4. SIGNS AND ADVERTISING DEVICES

A. Intent:

Most of Wellesley's business areas have an architectural character worth preserving and enhancing. The combined impact of groups of adjoining buildings can be part of the attraction of a shopping district. To maximize the effectiveness of signs and building architecture, every sign should be an integral, but noticeable, part of its building, and each building should be complementary to its group of buildings. As a result, the building and its sign become part of an overall image, each supporting the other and helping to draw customers. A sign on the building should be integrated into the building and not treated as an unrelated object attached to it.

B. Policy:

The size, location, design, color, texture, lighting and materials of signs and advertising devices shall be in harmony with significant architectural features of existing and proposed buildings and structures and with surrounding properties.

Signs shall conform to the maximum area, height, number, setback and illumination requirements set forth in Zoning Bylaw Section XXIIA Signs and Advertising Devices.

C. Recommendations:

- a. Sign size, placement and method of illumination should be consistent with other signs in the area;
- b. Signs on the same building or on a series of attached buildings should have consistency of size and expression;
- c. Signs should be placed on buildings consistent with architectural details and should not conflict with elements such as cornices, arches, lintels, pediments, windows, pilasters, etc.;

- d. The design of lettering, materials and colors should result in good visibility and a clear message;
- e. Consider mounting signs 1/2" to 1" away from the building's facade wall to cast a shadow, providing depth and visual interest to the sign;
- f. Signs in most of Wellesley's business areas should be oriented to the pedestrian or slow moving traffic. With the exception of Route 9, there are no "high speed" roadways passing through commercial areas where signage needs to be oriented to fast moving vehicles;
- g. Telephone numbers should not appear on signs. They tend to detract from the message, the appearance of the business establishment, and do not seem to be necessary or effective for most businesses.

5. HERITAGE

A. Intent:

The Design Review Board must ensure that new construction is in harmony with traditional, significant, or historic uses or structures and that those structures are reserved. When appropriate, the Board will consult with and request opinions and information from the Historic District Commission or the Historical Commission regarding specific structures or groups of structures.

B. Policy:

Removal or disruption of historic, traditional or significant uses, structures, or architectural elements should be minimized insofar as practicable, whether these exist on the site or on adjacent properties.

The covering or removal of original facade elements (columns, pilasters, fenestration, arches, lintels, decorative elements) is generally discouraged. Proposals for a facade renovation or new building construction that use a particular historical style should utilize accurate elements of that style. The proposed design of any construction project should complement and not

detract from any existing historical buildings or sites.

C. Recommendations:

- a. Architectural elements present on existing significant buildings should be incorporated when designing additions or renovations;
- b. Significant architectural elements should not be concealed by signage, facade alterations, or by any other means;
- c. Conversion of significant or historic structures to other uses should be done with sensitivity to the structure, with as little deviation as possible from the design intent of the original building;
- d. All mechanical equipment on roofs, including metal chimneys, and at grade must be concealed;
- e. An elevator penthouse, if added, shall be placed to minimize its visibility and shall be integrated into the design of the building so as to not detract from the significant architectural elements of the building or streetscape;
- f. The impacts of new construction on existing significant structures should be minimized. Such devices as building placement, design and landscaping may be used to mitigate impacts.

PART III - SITE PLAN APPROVAL

1. MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

A. Definition:

As defined in Zoning Bylaw Section XVIA. Site Plan Approval, projects which consist of changing the outside appearance of a building and includes one or more of the following is a Major Construction Project subject to Site Plan Approval:

1. construction of 2,500 or more square feet of gross floor area; increase in gross floor area by 50% or more which results in an increase of at least 2,500 square feet;
2. regrading and/or disturbance of existing vegetative cover of 5,000 or more square feet of land;
3. any activities regulated in Flood Plain or Watershed Protection Districts or Water Supply Protection Districts.

B. Description and Design Review Board role:

The Site Plan review process is a comprehensive review carried out by many Town Boards and departments to insure compliance with the Zoning Bylaw, to minimize additional traffic congestion, to insure adequate provision for utilities, and to evaluate the impact of proposed construction or alteration on the Town. Once the various reviews have been made of major projects, the Zoning Board of Appeals (Special Permit Granting Authority) conducts a hearing and makes its decision.

A major part of the Site Plan review process is Design Review, which occurs twice, at preliminary and final stages of the application.

The intent of a preliminary review is to provide a mechanism for early review of a project while its design is still flexible. It is the policy of the Design Review Board to work with applicants to develop a design that is appropriate for its location and use. The Board will not determine style, materials, or siting, relying on applicants to propose a design they feel best incorporates their needs and those of the Town.

The Board encourages creativity and sensitivity when fitting a project into the existing fabric of the Town.

Preliminary design review occurs before the applicant is ready to submit to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). All major construction projects must be reviewed by the Design Review Board prior to ZBA submission. A number of preliminary reviews are sometimes held, often at the request of the applicant to resolve design issues prior to preparing final plans for submission to the ZBA.

Final design review occurs after the project has officially been submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals for Site Plan Approval.

The Design Review Board, one of seven Town Boards and agencies that review the final plans, will report its recommendations to the ZBA for its consideration in making the decision. The Board will review the plans to see that its preliminary recommendations have been incorporated or studied and may make additional recommendations.

C. Procedure:

1. Determine if proposal falls into the major construction project category (final determination is made by the Inspector of Buildings);
2. Get submission information and application packet from the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board offices;
3. Request a preliminary Design Review meeting at the Planning Board office and submit all required materials. The Design Review Board meets twice every month;
4. Preliminary Design Review meeting - applicants or their representatives are required by the Board to attend. Useful and meaningful design review cannot occur without the applicant present;
5. The Design Review Board will send its written recommendations and comments to the applicant;
6. Submit the application and required materials for Site

Plan Approval at the Zoning Board of Appeals office;

7. Final Design Review - The Design Review Board will review final plans and send written recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals with a copy to the applicant;
8. ZBA hearing and decision.

2. MINOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

A. Definition:

Any construction project not included within the definition of a major construction project which involves one or both of the following is considered a minor construction project:

1. any change in the outside appearance of a building visible from a public or private street, requiring a building permit;
2. construction, enlargement or alteration of a parking or storage area requiring a parking plan permit.

B. Description and Design Review Board Role:

Minor construction projects require one review by the Design Review Board before the applicant may submit an application for a Building Permit. Plans submitted to the Board should be complete but flexible, as the Board may recommend changes to the plan. A number of meetings with the applicant are sometimes held, often at the applicant's request to resolve design issues.

C. Procedure:

1. Determine if proposal falls into the minor construction project category (final determination is made by the Inspector of Buildings);
2. Get information on Design Review Board submission requirements at the Planning Board office;
3. Submit all required materials and arrange for project

to be reviewed at the next Design Review Board meeting.
The Board meets twice every month;

4. Preliminary Design Review meeting - applicants or their representatives are required by the Board to attend. Useful and meaningful design review cannot occur without the applicant present;
5. The Design Review Board will forward its written recommendations to the Inspector of Buildings;
6. Apply for Permit.

PART IV - SIGNS

The Design Review Board reviews every application for a sign in the Town of Wellesley. Using the design criteria discussed in Part II and sign regulations set forth in the Zoning Bylaw (Section XXIIA), the Board evaluates each application and may make recommendations regarding placement, materials, colors, design, illumination, and size. See the sign table in the Zoning Bylaw Section XXIIA for the requirements for maximum area, height, illumination, setback, number and a determination of the permit process (final determination is made by the Inspector of Buildings).

The items listed in the sign permit row of the Table of Sign Regulations indicate that a sign within these parameters is allowed by sign permit. The special permit row indicates those requirements which a sign may be increased to by applying for a special permit. Signs may not exceed the limits allowed by special permit.

1. SIGN PERMITS

A. Definition:

Sign permits allow for a certain size, number, and type of signage by right. The table of sign regulations in Zoning Bylaw Section XXIIA lists allowable area, height above ground, number, illumination, and setback both by sign permit and by special permit. The sign permit process is short, with the Design Review Board having up to 21 days to review an application.

B. Procedure:

1. Determine if proposed sign requires a sign permit or special permit by reviewing proposal with the Planning Department;
2. Pick up an application for a sign permit and submission information for the Design Review Board at the Planning Board office;
3. Submit the completed application and required materials to the Planning Board office. The Design Review Board will not review any application until all required information has been submitted;

4. Design Review Board meeting - Applicants or their representatives are required by the Board to attend. The Board will routinely disapprove any application where there is no one present representing the applicant. Useful and meaningful design review cannot occur without the applicant's participation;
5. The Design Review Board will send its written recommendations to the Inspector of Buildings and the applicant. If all zoning requirements and building code requirements are met, the Inspector of Buildings will issue the permit;
6. Pick up sign permit at the Planning Board office, incorporating any changes resulting from the Design Review Board meeting on the application.

2. SPECIAL PERMIT SIGNS

A. Definition:

After reviewing the table of sign requirements in Zoning Bylaw Section XXIIA and consulting with the Building Department, it may be determined that a Special Permit for a proposed sign is required. The procedure for special permit signs which exceed the requirements for "by right" signs that require a sign permit is established in the Zoning Bylaw. The process involves two Design Review Board reviews and approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

B. Design Review Board Role:

The Design Review Board will review a sign requiring a special permit twice. A preliminary review must occur before the applicant is able to submit an application to the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Proposals at this stage should be flexible. The Board sends its recommendations to the applicant for incorporation into the final plans. After submission of an application to the ZBA for the special permit but prior to the ZBA hearing, the Design Review Board will conduct a final review. The Board will review the proposal to see whether its recommendations have been incorporated or studied, and will send

its recommendation on the final plan to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

C. Procedure:

1. Determine that proposed sign requires a special permit by reviewing the proposal with the Building Department and the Planning Board office;
2. Get information and application packet from Zoning Board of Appeals office and Design Review requirements from the Planning Board office;
3. Submit all required materials to the Planning Board office and arrange for proposal to be reviewed at the next Design Review Board meeting;
4. Preliminary Design Review Board meeting - Applicants or their representatives are required by the Board to attend. The Board will routinely disapprove any application where there is no one present representing the applicant. Useful and meaningful design review cannot occur without the applicant's participation;
5. The Board will send its written recommendations to the applicant;
6. Submit application and required materials for a special permit to the Zoning Board of Appeals;
7. The Design Review Board will conduct its final review of the application prior to the ZBA hearing. Applicants are required by the Board to attend. The Board will forward its written recommendations to the ZBA;
8. Zoning Board of Appeals hearing and decision;
9. Pick up sign permit at Building Department.

PART V - SUBMISSION MATERIALS

1. MAJOR AND MINOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

- A. Major Construction Projects: Refer to submission requirements in "Submission Packet: Site Plan Approval" available at the Zoning Board of Appeals Office.
- B. Minor Construction Projects: Scaled site plans should show the following:
 - 1. Existing and proposed boundary lines, including dimensions and area of the lot shown;
 - 2. Location of all existing and proposed buildings and structures;
 - 3. Location of existing and proposed driveways, parking areas and handicapped ramps;
 - 4. Location of zone lines and existing zoning district;
 - 5. Layout of all parking spaces including dimensions of spaces;
 - 6. Total number of parking spaces, number of standard spaces, compact spaces and handicapped spaces;
 - 7. Location of all open space including existing and proposed landscaped areas (show all major trees, including street trees);
 - 8. Details of landscaping indicating the types and size of trees and shrubs to be planted;
 - 9. Any mechanical equipment located at grade;
 - 10. Indication of method of preserving existing vegetation and buildings during and after construction.

Scaled elevation drawings should show the following:

- 1. Details of major architectural elements;

2. Indication of the materials to be used;
3. Dimensions indicating height, width and length of the building or addition;
4. Any mechanical equipment on roofs.

At least two photographs of the site and/or building including the surrounding area must be submitted.

For major construction projects, the Design Review Board may require that a study model be submitted before an application is filed with the Zoning Board of Appeals.

2. SIGN PERMITS AND SIGNS REQUIRING SPECIAL PERMITS

- A. Special Permit: Refer to submission requirements in "Submission Packet: Signs" available at the Zoning Board of Appeals office.
- B. Sign Permit: (All drawings must be to scale)
 1. Copy of Sign Permit application from Planning Department;
 2. Scaled drawings of the proposed sign showing area, height, width, colors, illumination and materials;
 3. Location plan for standing signs showing distances set back from the property lines, streets and buildings;
 4. Facade rendering for wall and window signs showing dimensions, colors and materials of the proposed sign on the building. Dimensions of the facade and distance from the ground elevation to the top of the sign must be included.

At least two color photographs showing existing facade/site and surrounding area must be submitted.

